

IN THE CLAIMS

The following is a complete listing of the claims in this application, reflects all changes currently being made to the claims, and replaces all earlier versions and all earlier listings of the claims:

Claim 1 (Previously Presented): An adjustable orthopedic tool comprising:

a shaft portion having first and second ends and a longitudinal axis, an adjustment portion and a fastener receiving portion, the first end comprising a cutting portion configured to drill a hole in bone, and the second end configured to be coupled to a source of rotational motion;

a fastener engaging portion; and

an adjustment mechanism mounted on the shaft and configured to allow the user to vary a distance between the cutting portion and the fastener engaging portion;

wherein the fastener receiving portion is configured to receive at least a portion of a cannulated fastener thereon; the fastener engaging portion is configured to rotationally couple the tool to a driving portion of the cannulated fastener to transmit rotational motion thereto; and the adjustment mechanism is selectively movable along the longitudinal axis of the shaft to allow the tool to accept fasteners having different lengths,

wherein the adjustment portion of the shaft further comprises external threads and the adjustment mechanism further comprises internal threads, the threads are engageable to allow the shaft and mechanism to be moved axially along a longitudinal axis of the shaft by rotating the pieces with respect to each other.

Claim 2 (Original): The adjustable orthopedic tool of claim 1, wherein the cutting portion and the fastener engaging portion can be rotated at different speeds with respect to one another.

Claim 3 (Canceled)

Claim 4 (Original): The adjustable orthopedic tool of claim 1, wherein movement of the adjustment mechanism adjusts the distance between the fastener engaging portion of the adjustment mechanism and the cutting portion of the shaft.

Claim 5 (Original): The adjustable orthopedic tool of claim 4, wherein the adjustment mechanism comprises at least first and second sleeves, the first sleeve comprising inner threads configured to engage the external threads of the shaft and the fastener engaging portion disposed on the second sleeve.

Claim 6 (Original): The adjustable orthopedic tool of claim 5, the shaft further comprising a plurality of calibration marks disposed between the adjustment portion and the second end, each calibration mark corresponding to a predetermined distance between the fastener engaging portion of the adjustment mechanism and the first end of the shaft.

Claim 7 (Original): The adjustable orthopedic tool of claim 6, the first sleeve further having a proximal end, wherein adjusting the adjustment mechanism so that the proximal end of the first sleeve lies adjacent to one of the calibration marks results in the fastener engaging portion of the adjustment mechanism being located a predetermined distance from the first end of the shaft corresponding to the mark.

Claim 8 (Original): The adjustable orthopedic tool of claim 4, wherein when a cannulated fastener having a head portion and a tip portion is received on the shaft, the distance is adjustable to allow the fastener engaging portion of the adjustment assembly to rotationally engage the fastener head while allowing at least a first length of the shaft cutting portion to extend distally beyond the fastener tip.

Claim 9 (Previously Presented): The adjustable orthopedic tool of claim 8, wherein the first length is selected in the range of from about 0 millimeters (mm) to about 10 mm.

Claim 10 (Original): The adjustable orthopedic tool of claim 9, wherein the first length is about 1 mm.

Claim 11 (Original): The adjustable orthopedic tool of claim 9, wherein the first length is about 4.5 mm

Claims 12-37 (Canceled)

Claim 38 (Previously Presented): An adjustable orthopedic tool comprising:

a shaft portion having first and second ends and a longitudinal axis, an adjustment portion comprising external threads and a fastener receiving portion, the first end comprising a cutting portion configured to drill a hole in bone, and the second end configured to be coupled to a source of rotational motion;

a fastener engaging portion; and

an adjustment mechanism mounted on the shaft and configured to allow the user to vary a distance between the cutting portion and the fastener engaging portion;

wherein the fastener receiving portion is configured to receive at least a portion of a cannulated fastener thereon; the fastener engaging portion is configured to rotationally couple the tool to a driving portion of the cannulated fastener to transmit rotational motion thereto; and the adjustment mechanism is selectively movable along the longitudinal axis of the shaft to allow the tool to accept fasteners having different lengths,

wherein movement of the adjustment mechanism adjusts the distance between the fastener engaging portion of the adjustment mechanism and the cutting portion of the shaft, and

wherein the adjustment mechanism comprises at least first and second sleeves, the first sleeve comprising inner threads configured to engage the external threads of the shaft and the fastener engaging portion disposed on the second sleeve.

Claim 39 (Previously Presented): The adjustable orthopedic tool of claim 38, wherein the cutting portion and the fastener engaging portion can be rotated at different speeds with respect to one another.

Claim 40 (Previously Presented): The adjustable orthopedic tool of claim 38, wherein the adjustment portion of the shaft further comprises external threads and the adjustment mechanism further comprises internal threads, the threads are engageable to allow the shaft and mechanism to be moved axially along a longitudinal axis of the shaft by rotating the pieces with respect to each other.

Claim 41 (Previously Presented): The adjustable orthopedic tool of claim 38, the shaft further comprising a plurality of calibration marks disposed between the adjustment portion and the second end, each calibration mark corresponding to a predetermined distance between the fastener engaging portion of the adjustment mechanism and the first end of the shaft.

Claim 42 (Previously Presented): The adjustable orthopedic tool of claim 41, the first sleeve further having a proximal end, wherein adjusting the adjustment mechanism so that the proximal end of the first sleeve lies adjacent to one of the calibration marks results in the fastener engaging portion of the adjustment mechanism being located a predetermined distance from the first end of the shaft corresponding to the mark.

Claim 43 (Previously Presented): The adjustable orthopedic tool of claim 38, wherein when a cannulated fastener having a head portion and a tip portion is received on the shaft, the distance is adjustable to allow the fastener engaging portion of the adjustment assembly to rotationally engage the fastener head while allowing at least a first length of the shaft cutting portion to extend distally beyond the fastener tip.

Claim 44 (Currently Amended): The adjustable orthopedic tool of claim ~~[[38]]~~ 43, wherein the first length is selected in the range of from about 0 millimeters (mm) to about 10 mm.

Claim 45 (Previously Presented): The adjustable orthopedic tool of claim 44, wherein the first length is about 1 mm.

Claim 46 (Previously Presented): The adjustable orthopedic tool of claim 44, wherein the first length is about 4.5 mm.

Claim 47 (New): An adjustable orthopedic tool comprising:

a shaft portion having first and second ends and a longitudinal axis, an adjustment portion comprising external threads and a fastener receiving portion, the first end comprising a cutting portion configured to drill a hole in bone, and the second end configured to be coupled to a source of rotational motion;

a fastener engaging portion; and

an adjustment mechanism mounted on the shaft and configured to allow the user to vary a distance between the cutting portion and the fastener engaging portion;

wherein the fastener receiving portion is configured to receive at least a portion of a cannulated fastener thereon; the fastener engaging portion is configured to rotationally couple the tool to a driving portion of the cannulated fastener to transmit rotational motion thereto; and the adjustment mechanism is selectively movable along the longitudinal axis of the shaft to allow the tool to accept fasteners having different lengths,

wherein movement of the adjustment mechanism adjusts the distance between the fastener engaging portion of the adjustment mechanism and the cutting portion of the shaft,

wherein the adjustment mechanism comprises at least first and second sleeves, the first sleeve comprising inner threads configured to engage the external threads of the shaft and the fastener engaging portion disposed on the second sleeve, and

wherein when a cannulated fastener having a head portion and a tip portion is received on the shaft, the distance is adjustable to allow the fastener engaging portion of the adjustment assembly to rotationally engage the fastener head while allowing at least a first length of the shaft cutting portion to extend distally beyond the fastener tip.